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From: "Miranda Paster" <miranda.paster@lacity.org>
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April 2017

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The State of Retail

As I write this President's letter it is raining in San Francisco, and I am watching a mentally ill homeless woman yell incoherently and throw garbage onto the recently swept sidewalk. The good news is that the Governor has declared the drought over in California. The bad news is that we still have a visible homeless problem. As the woman checks her reflection in the door of the recently closed BCBG store, I turn my focus to the state of retail in Union Square.



Union Square is fortunate to have some of the best shopping on the planet, from luxury to value, and at all price points in between, in a very authentic and walkable area. However, as I learned at the recent CDA/IDA West Coast Urban District Forum in Long Beach, a variety of factors are negatively impacting our collective retail sales, and vacancy rates are inching upward. We are below a 10% vacancy rate, which is under the danger zone, so we are lucky for now. But what is causing this downward trend?



We know consumer behavior is changing with increasing options on where and how to shop. Consumers can easily browse online in the comfort of their home thus avoiding the hassle of traffic, expensive parking, street construction, and panhandlers. We understand Millennials, who have a considerable impact on our retail economy, want to buy goods and services from authentic, trustworthy companies. They expect products to be made under fair labor practices with genuine materials. They are looking for hip, local shops that offer unique, personalized, and Instagrammable experiences.

As downtown champions, what is our role in ensuring that our retail centers stay vibrant? At the Union Square BID, we recently called in experts (retail brokers and consultants) to talk about recent retail trends, and how to be responsive. Larger stores are being divided in two or subleased with a demand for smaller retail spaces, and conditional use permits are being submitted to convert third floor retail space into other uses. The experts tell us that in Union Square, flexible spaces, such as pop-up stores where a retail concept can be tested, do quite well.

Shopping must be a fun, positive, and satisfying experience to be successful. Having the right products and services, providing excellent customer service, and ensuring a satisfying ambiance, from lighting and music

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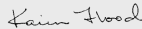
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to overall presentation are essential components. we as
place managers need to ensure the experience on the
outside matches that of the store's interior. Our
sidewalks must be clean, safe, and pleasant. Parking
garages must be well lit and wayfinding systems
intuitive for all visitors.

As we continue this conversation about the current state
of retail and vibrancy of our respective downtowns, I
welcome you to e-mail me with your comments. In the
meantime, keep up the excellent work!

Warm regards,



Karin Flood
Executive Director
Union Square BID
karin@unionsquarebid.com

CDA POLICY CORNER

Urban Revitalization

It's an exciting time to be engaged in urban
revitalization issues in California. Every legislator I talk
to who represents an urban center asks me the
question: "How can you help us continue to revitalize
my city?" Which is always followed-up by more detailed
questions about housing, transportation, mixed used
development and mental health.

What is particularly unique about CDA and why we are
receiving greater interest in the Capitol is because of a
few critical factors:

- CDA is the only organized business voice in the
Capitol that is solely focused on urban-centric
issues.
- We have a true statewide presence given our
members are represented in virtually every
legislative district in the state.
- The organization can establish a policy narrative
and personal relationship and our reach can be
extremely effective with lawmakers.
- We do business in districts that matter - our voice
can reach to legislative leadership and key chairs
of committees.

CDA is also benefited from a focused advocacy strategy
that is true to our mission of supporting urban-centric
economic development issues. We can, and should, stay
extremely disciplined on core issues that impact
downtowns. This is who we are and this is how we will
develop and grow our identity and strength in the
Capitol.

Jason Bryant
Bryant Government Affairs
April 2017 Legislative Update

CDA MENTIONS

Putting People First: Rethinking Downtown Development

Long Beach Business Journal

As technology advances and life expectations evolve,
many argue that society, specifically major cities...

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Millennials Shaping Cities - And the Zeitgeist

Long Beach Business Journal

At the Psychic Temple - a rehabbed historic building that
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West...

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Retail Turmoil means Stores must Innovate Faster

The San Francisco Chronicle

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Governing

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Next Stop for Getta Clue and its Streetwear: Downtown Commons

The Sacramento Bee

Getta Clue just got a new address. The locally owned
clothing store, regarded for keeping Sacramento...

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The Downtown Burbank Partnership
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Historic Preservation can Revitalize Downtown San Diego

The San Diego Union-Tribune

The C Street corridor needs exciting architecture and new development, and Save our Heritage... [READ MORE>>](#)

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The Guardian

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City Lab

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The New York Times

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T4America Blog

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CDA District Digest

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